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Post Season FARM LABOR REPORT



STATE of MICHIGAN • 1952



MICHIGAN
 AGRICULTURAL AND FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES
 SEASONAL LABOR FORCE FOR 1952

Date	Total Labor Force	Total Out-of State Labor	Percent Out-of State Labor	AGRICULTURAL		FOOD PROCESSING		Puerto Ricans	FOREIGN	
				Total	Out-of State	Total	Out-of State		Mexican Nationals	British West Indians
April 30	8,571	3,450	40.2%	7,561	3,150	1,010	300			91
May 15	13,901	6,600	47.5	11,491	5,900	2,410	700			91
May 30	40,768	27,467	67.4	34,868	24,267	5,900	3,200	257	476	88
June 15	55,111	35,436	64.3	47,351	32,136	7,760	3,300	307	542	88
June 30	74,548	41,259	55.3	66,748	37,599	7,800	3,660	213	1,233	88
July 15	95,798	53,623	56.0	85,898	49,958	9,900	3,665	213	2,604	88
Aug. 15	80,100	39,250	49.0	70,280	37,500	9,820	1,750	350	4,187	100
Sept. 15	53,072	23,185	43.7	42,022	20,385	11,050	2,800	190	1,082	285
Oct. 15	26,645	7,407	27.8	19,450	6,407	7,195	1,000	48	425	521
Nov. 15	9,282	1,240	13.4	3,376	340	5,906	900	6	11	88

Interstate Labor:

Out-of-State workers are the backbone of the seasonal farm labor force in Michigan. They not only do a majority of the work in activities requiring stoop labor, such as pickle picking and hoeing muck crops, but also do a large proportion of the work in the fruit harvests.

The largest single group of workers in Michigan were Texans of Mexican descent. Many of these workers were recruited in Texas by representatives of the pickle and sugar beet growers. Others came to Michigan on their own, following the regular migratory routes.

The next largest number of workers came from the states of Missouri and Arkansas. Some of these workers came to Michigan in April to work in vegetable crops while others followed the strawberry harvest north. A drought which reduced labor demands in their home states caused more of these workers to come to Michigan during 1952 than in past years.

Other states supplying large numbers of workers were Florida, Kentucky, Louisiana, Tennessee, Georgia, Mississippi and Oklahoma.

Out-of-Country Labor:

Out-of-Country and off-shore workers were an important part of Michigan's 1952 seasonal farm labor force. These workers prevented serious shortages in the blocking and thinning of sugar beets and the harvesting of pickles and tomatoes.

The largest group of out-of-country workers were Mexican Nationals. Nearly 4,000 of these workers were employed blocking and thinning sugar beets and picking pickles, a few were also used in the apple harvest.

British West Indians were the next largest group of out-of-country workers. They were mainly used in the intensive fruit and vegetable areas of eastern Michigan. Some were also brought into the state during September to prevent losses in the tomato harvest.

The off-shore labor force consisted of 187 Puerto Ricans who were contracted to work in the sugar beet and pickle fields.

While foreign and off-shore workers were only a small portion of the states seasonal labor force often this small number was enough to prevent crop losses.